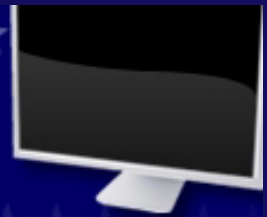




Media Fairness Initiative

A Look at Bias in the News



Poll Finds Most Americans Skeptical of Media

1/16/08

A Sacred Heart University poll released this month found that **just 19.6 percent of those surveyed believe all or most news media reporting.**

Perhaps even more troubling, **87.6 percent of Americans believe that the news media attempt to influence public opinion, and 86 percent agreed that the news media attempt to influence public policies** – up from 76.7 percent in a 2003 Sacred Heart poll.

“The fact that an astonishing percentage of Americans see biases and partisanship in their mainstream news sources suggests an active and critical consumer of information in the U.S.,” stated James Castonguay, Ph.D., associate professor and chair of Sacred Heart’s Department of Media Studies & Digital Culture.

Fox News was rated the “most trusted” national TV news outlet (27 percent). CNN, which was seen as “most trusted” in the 2003 poll, finished second this year (14.6 percent).

Williams Admits NBC Neglected GOP Primary

On the Jan. 9 edition of NBC *Nightly News*, **Brian Williams admitted that Sen. John McCain “didn’t get all the attention he deserved” during his NBC’s coverage of the New Hampshire primary.**

Williams read a viewer e-mail that argued “all the air time and talk was directed to the Democrats, and nothing of any substance was shared about the Republican candidates.”

NBC isn’t the only network giving more coverage to the Democrat race. **The Jan. 7 edition of ABC’s *Good Morning America* devoted almost 15 minutes of coverage to analyzing the race between Democrats Barack Obama and Hillary Clinton. Just 30 seconds were devoted to the Republican race.**



Reporter Struggles to Cover Obama Objectively

NBC News reporter Lee Cowan admitted last week that it is difficult to objectively cover Sen. Barack Obama’s presidential campaign.

Cowan, reporting backstage at an Obama event in New Hampshire on Jan. 7, told anchor Brian Williams: **“From a reporter’s point of view it’s almost hard to remain objective because it’s infectious, the energy, I think. It sort of goes against your core to say that as a reporter, but the crowds have gotten so much bigger, his energy has gotten stronger.”**

On the Jan. 13 episode of CNN’s *Reliable Sources*, former CBS reporter Terence Smith agreed that Obama is “absolutely” benefitting from “sympathetic” coverage by the mainstream media.

In addition, former *Washington Post* political editor John Harris added: “Almost a couple years ago, you would send a reporter out with Obama, and it was like they needed to go through detox when they came back: ‘Oh, he’s so impressive, he’s so charismatic,’ and we’re kind of like, ‘Down Boy.’”